

Report details millions in bonuses, instances of nepotism and abuse of authority

Washington, DC-Thursday, Congressman Harry Teague submitted a letter to Congressman Bob Filner, Chair of the House Veterans Affairs Committee calling for a hearing to investigate recent misconduct uncovered in a report published by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). In addition to finding that employees were engaged in misuses of position, abuse of authority and prohibited personnel practices, the report found that officials in the Office of Information and Technology were paid \$24 million in bonuses.

"Currently, the VA has thousands of open cases that have been filed by veterans from across the country. These veterans are asking for the benefits that they were promised and that they are entitled to." said Congressman Harry Teague who is a member of the House Committee on Veteran's Affairs. "Sadly, in many cases my colleagues and I have to intervene on our veterans' behalf to help them through the overly bureaucratic, and often tedious, process of obtaining benefits. And while we fight for those who served, we now see that there are people in the VA who abuse the system."

The report can be accessed at the OIG website: <http://www.va.gov/oig/default.asp>

Full text of the letter is below:

Congressman Harry Teague

The Honorable Bob Filner

Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs

335 Cannon House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Filner:

As you know, a recent report was published by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) uncovering the fact that officials in the Office of Information and Technology were paid \$24 million in bonuses. In the report, it was further determined that the same officials that received these bonuses were engaged in "misuse of position, abuse of authority and prohibited personnel practices" (*Veterans Affairs office of the Inspector General, Report Number 09-01123-195*).

I am completely astonished at these actions. Currently, the VA has thousands of open cases that have been filed by veterans from across the country. These veterans are asking for the benefits that they were promised and that they are entitled to. Sadly, in many cases my colleagues and I have to intervene on our veterans' behalf to help them through the overly bureaucratic, and often tedious, process of obtaining benefits. And while we fight for those who served, we now see that there are people in the VA who abuse the system.

Such actions are an insult to the millions of veterans who have served our beloved country and they tarnish the work that is being done by the many upstanding VA employees.

With these developments being brought to light, I would respectfully request that the House Committee on Veterans Affairs have a hearing on this issue. In advance, should this hearing be held in the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, I ask permission to be seated at the dais to take part in this very important issue.

I thank you for your time and attention on this matter and I look forward to continuing to work under your leadership to foster a better life for our country's veterans.

Sincerely,

Harry Teague

Member of Congress